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(P) FENWICK 1/10s.

OBITUARY

OF

CHARLES NEWBY WAWN, ESQ.

He dwelt in honoure and worshipec among his People, and enlarged the intrance of the House and of the Courte.

Ecclus. L. Coverdale's Trans.



NEWCASTLE :

FROM THE NEWCASTLE CHRONICLE OF 30TH MAY,
1840.

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TO
THE REV. JOHN TYSON,
VICAR OF
MERRINGTON,
THIS
OBITUARY
OF OUR LATE LAMENTED
FRIEND
IS AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED.

Away Despair : my gracious Lord doth hear :
Though winds and waves assault my keel,
He doth preserve it : he doth steer,
Ev'n while the boat seems most to reel :
Storms are the triumph of his art :
Well may he close his eyes, but not his heart.

HERBERT.

MR. WAWN.

DIED on the 22d inst., aged 58, Charles Newby Wawn, Esq., late of this town. Mr. Wawn for many years practised with distinguished ability and success, the profession of a Surgeon-Dentist: and at one time spread the influence of his name as a most skilful and talented operator, from York to Edinburgh, and from the German Ocean to the Irish Sea. His manners were highly polished and refined—his intelligence varied and extensive—his benevolence unsectarian and unbounded—and his whole life regulated by the pure principles of our Holy Religion.

He was eminently skilled in mechanical science and most happy in its application, under a singularly correct judgment, to the relief of suffering humanity. He cultivated music and the languages. He was extensively conversant with the Hebrew, and its cognate tongues, with those of the two polite nations of antiquity, and with most of the languages and dialects of modern Europe. He wrote and spoke with great fluency. His style was rather ornate and distinguished by sweeping and accumulated epithet. Notwithstanding the extent of his practice, his labours in the cause of religion and humanity were untiring and multitudinous. At the period when Mr. Wawn ascended the horizon, there were but few men in this part of the country, of his rank and influence, who would submit to the brand of enthusiast and methodist, but with an Apostolical heroism, he gloried in the cross, and to his piety and zeal we owe, among other kindred institutions, the formation of the Newcastle Bible and Tract Societies, and also of the Sunday School Union, and the Auxiliary Church and Jewish Missionary Societies.

Like the great Apostle of Methodism, he venerated the memory of the founders—fully appreciated the excellencies of the formularies—and considered himself a true son of the Church of England, whilst at the same time he held membership and office in the Wesleyan body, and general union with Evangelical Christians of other denominations—but he was a Catholic and an Eclectic in the genuine sense of the terms—and

“——In his duty, prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.”

In short, it seemed to be the business of his life, to soften down religious differences and animosities, and to unite in one bond of brotherhood and affection, the whole family of Christ.

The great medical and surgical charities of the district were indebted to him for energetic support. He was anxious that the seminary which had communicated the elements of knowledge to the martyred Ridley, to Stowell, to Eldon, to Chambers, and to Collingwood, should not remain a *bare* grammar school; and when Henry Atkinson appeared as a candidate for one of its vacant masterships, and had to stem the torrent of prejudice which set in against that mathematical genius, for the part which he had taken in the Don Juan controversy, Mr. Wawn raised the barrier of his powerful pen against it; although he had been one of the most formidable of that great man's opponents, in the struggle respecting the admissibility of Lord Byron's talented but objectionable work, into the Literary and Philosophical Society of this town, a struggle which, headed by the present learned Master of the Temple, shook that institution to its very centre.

His labours were very considerable in that great work of national righteousness, the Abolition of Colonial Slavery. He published a series of well-written papers under the signature “Eleutheros,” on that important subject, which produced a considerable impression on the public mind. His pamphlet on the unfortunate judgment pronounced in the case of the slave Grace, shews the versatility of his genius and the extent of his erudition, and excites the deepest re-

gret that the greatest civilian and canonist which England has produced, and of whom Newcastle may be justly proud, should have given his dying testimony in favour of a principle, striking at the liberties of mankind.

Who would not grieve if such a man there be?

Who would not mourn if ATTICUS were he?

Mr. Wawn seldom "travelled out of the record" of religion and humanity, but when he did apply himself to other affairs he was not a whit behind the "very chiefest" of those engaged in them. He had great discrimination of character, and was early attracted by the intellectual power of a man then in obscure circumstances, but who has since shed a flood of light upon the world, George Stephenson. Mr. Wawn espoused his cause in the controversy with Sir Humphry Davy, and was, to a considerable extent, the means of developing the merits of a philosopher, the native force of whose intellect has raised him to an eminence to which no man of the present age can approach, with the solitary exception of our illustrious fellow-townsmen, Richard Grainger.

The access which Mr. Wawn's professional skill gave him to the wealthy and the influential classes of society, was made available to the support of the various religious and benevolent institutions which he had either formed or patronised. The largesses which he poured into the treasury from these sources were truly astonishing, and without the aid thus afforded, these works of beneficence and mercy would at that day have come to an end.

Mr. Wawn occasionally courted the Muses, and some beautiful poetical effusions are the product of his pen. His writings, which are very numerous, are principally anonymous, and scattered over the reports of the different institutions with which he was connected, and in the monthly and other periodicals of the time. He is, however, favourably known as the writer of an interesting memoir of the late Mr. Flanders, the banker, and of Thomas Curry, a pious keelman. Thus lived and thus laboured the amiable and accomplished subject of this slight tribute to his memory, until a painful disease some years ago threw him out

of the glare of public life. A new race of philanthropists have sprung up, "who knew not Joseph." But whether the name of Charles Wawn be forgotten or appreciated, a generation of our fellow-citizens have already participated, and are now participating, in the blessings communicated by the institutions which he originated; and generations yet unborn are destined to enjoy their happy results. He retired to Tynemouth about two years ago, where he rather suddenly, but in perfect tranquillity of mind, finished his course, at peace with his Maker, through the blood of atonement, and in charity with all mankind.

Hail! and farewell!

APPENDIX.

At a meeting of the committee of the Newcastle upon Tyne Bible Society, held on the 28th day of May, 1840,

JAMES FINLAY, Esq., in the chair,

Information of the death of the late CHARLES NEWBY WAWN, Esq., having been communicated to the meeting, it was, on a motion by Mr. John Fenwick, seconded by Mr. George Airey, and supported by Mr. Daniel Oliver, unanimously resolved, that the following Memorial be inserted among the proceedings of the committee, viz. :—

“ Almighty God having been pleased to call out of this transitory state the late CHARLES NEWBY WAWN, Esq., this committee desire to record their sense of the services rendered by that highly-gifted and accomplished individual to the great cause of Bible circulation.

“ The committee trace to the exertions of Mr. Wawn, the origin of the Newcastle Bible Society. The simplicity and unity of the constitution of that, in London, made a powerful impression on his liberal and enlightened mind, and he rested not until there was formed in this influential and important town, a society, combining, without distinction of sect or party, all who were willing to give universal circulation to THE BOOK which is at once the sole source and the only spring of all true religion and of all sound morality. He was delighted to see the Newcastle Society take deep root in the affections of his fellow townsmen; to behold it branch forth, like the stately cedar, and scatter its leaves for the healing of the district. When it flourished, he gave God the glory; when storms assailed it, he forsook it not, but was ever found at his post braving every danger, and cheering on his associates, by the force of his example, the strength of his piety, and the energy of his genius. By one of those mysterious

dispensations Him, who is wonderful in council and excellent in working, this committee, have, for some years past, been deprived of the active services of their late excellent friend and associate ; yet they rejoice, that in the chamber of his retirement, the word of the living God was the constant subject of his study, the solace of his spirit, and the strength of his heart ; and that when the great crisis of his existence approached, he found the doctrines of Revelation a rod and a staff to comfort him in his walk through the valley of the shadow of death. His life was eminently that of the righteous ; his death was essentially like his."

